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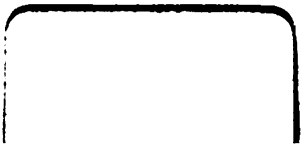

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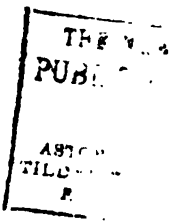
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A. M. ROBERTSON
1916

ALTAR: PALACE OF FINE ARTS

THE EVANESCENT CITY

by

GEORGE STERLING

With Nine Illustrations after Photographs

by

FRANCIS BRUGUIERE

And
A Cover in Color after the Painting by
WILL SPARKS

SAN FRANCISCO
A. M. ROBERTSON
1916

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Note:

This poem, commemorative of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, with its accompanying illustrations after photographs by Francis Bruguiere, first appeared in Sunset Magazine, to whose Editors the Publisher is indebted for permission to reprint it in the present form. The illustration on the cover, after the painting by Will Sparks, has not been published heretofore. The poem is set by hand in Frederic W. Goudy's Kennerley Italic, but recently cut by him, and is, we believe, here used in a book for the first time.

WOR 19FEB'36

THE EVANESCENT CITY

GREAT on the west, ere darkness crush her domes,

Wine-red the city of the sunset lies.

Below her courts the mournful ocean foams;

Above, no foam of cloud is in the skies.

Awhile I stand, a dreamer by the deep,

And watch the winds of evening sap her walls,

Till ashen armies to the ramparts sweep

And seas of shadow storm the gleaming halls.

PALACE OF
HORTICULTURE

So dies that far magnificence of light,

A conquered splendor on a crumbling pyre,

'Mid fall of crimson temples from their height

And ruined altars yielding up their fire.

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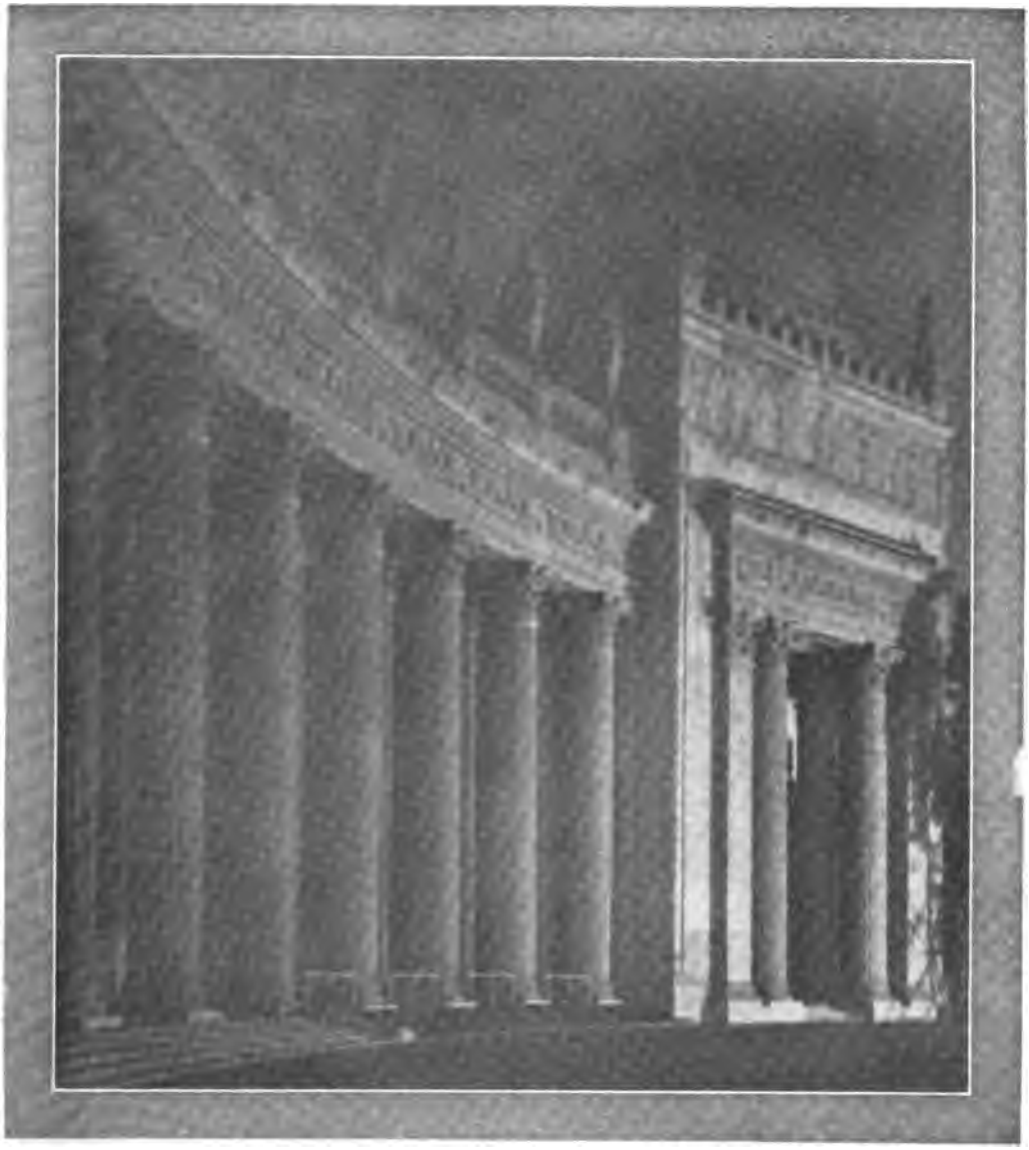
So fades that city, one with all that finds

The nameless road that Beauty takes at last—

One with her dust upon the twilight winds

And all her music mingling with the Past.



"Farewell!" I whisper low—then thrill to see,

Unseen till now, eternal and afar,

Soul of dead day and pledge of peace to be,

The tranquil silver of the evening star. . . .

And even thus our city of a year

Must pass like those the shafted sunsets build,

Fleeting as all fair things and, fleeting, dear—

A rainbow fallen and an anthem stilled.

A rainbow fallen—but within the soul

Its deep indubitable iris burns;

An anthem stilled—yet for its ghostly goal

The incommunicable music yearns.

COLUMNS AND LAGOON:
PALACE OF FINE ARTS

Only for Beauty's passing shall we trace

The heavenly pathway that her feet have trod;

Only at her departure seek her face—

We that shall find it not this side of God.

COLUMNS AND ROTUNDA:
PALACE OF FINE ARTS

THE END

JUN 21 1940

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